

# History of Daniel (Part 1)

## Daniel 1:1-7

Some things about Daniel to serve as an introduction to the book that he wrote.

1. Daniel was of the tribe of Judah as Ezekiel was of Levi and being of the royal family of David he was especially equipped to write of Messiah as Israel's coming king.
2. He was a teenager taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar during the first siege of Jerusalem in 605 B.C. (eight years before Ezekiel).
3. While in captivity without the slightest compromise he faithfully served under the administration of three kings – Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius.
4. He was himself ministered to by both of heaven's recorded archangels, Gabriel and Michael (9:21; 10:13).
5. He has more to say about the coming antichrist than any other Old Testament writer.
6. Ezekiel refers to:
  - a. The righteousness of Daniel, comparing him with Noah and Job (Ezek. 14:14)
  - b. The wisdom of Daniel (Ezek. 28:3)
7. Jesus quoted Daniel during his Mt. Olivet discourse (Matt. 24:15)
8. No doubt as a boy he heard the preaching of

Jeremiah and became a convert to his way of life and thus prepared to begin the life of Godliness as he lived long in Babylon. Sir Isaac Newton wrote: "To reject the Prophet Daniel is to reject Christianity."

The Book of Daniel and the Book of Revelation are companion prophecies and must be studied together. They deal with the same great subjects and use almost exactly the same symbols.

With all that in mind, as we look at our text in this message, we find some preliminary historical details that are important to the life of Daniel and will help us understand just how unique a man he was.

## **I. GOD'S PROPHECIES WILL ALWAYS BE FULFILLED – vs. 1-2**

***A. When considering the prophecies here fulfilled, keep in mind that the prophecies in the Bible that have had a past fulfillment show to us that the prophecies with a future fulfillment will also come to pass exactly as God has said they would.***

1. There are some 2500 prophecies in the Bible – 2000 of which have already been fulfilled.
2. We can be sure then, that the remaining 500 will be.

***B. The test of a true prophet and true prophecy is found in Deut. 18:20-22 (cf. Jer. 28:11-17).***

Deuteronomy 18:20-22

<sup>20</sup> But the prophet, which shall presume to speak

a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.

<sup>21</sup> And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken?

<sup>22</sup> When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

***C. God had told the Israelites that they would be taken captive by the Babylonians – vs. 1 records the beginning of that fulfillment, which is prophesied and recorded in Jeremiah 25.***

***D. This invasion was the first of three invasions by Babylon into Israel.***

1. 605 BC – This is when Daniel and other members of Judah's elite were taken into captivity (see Daniel 1:1-6).
2. 597 BC – Jehoiakim was taken into captivity (see 2 Chron 36:5,6). Three months and ten days later Jehoiachin, along with other members of the royal family, were taken into captivity (see 2 Chron 36:9,10 & 2 Kings 24:15-17).

***E. 586 BC – After a siege lasting approximately one and a half years, Jerusalem was conquered and destroyed. Most of the people were taken into captivity, along with articles from the temple. Only the poorest people remained (see 2 Kings 25).***

1. There is one truth here that we must never overlook – God will hold man accountable for their sin.
2. Sin, and the lack of repentance of that sin, caused the destruction recorded here.
3. How sad it must have been for the good people of Israel (and there were good people there) to watch as those precious treasures were carted off by the enemy!
4. "He took the richest and finest of them for the service of his god Bel, and left what were necessary for carrying on the public worship of Jehovah, (for he did not attempt to alter the civil or religious constitution of Judea); for leaving Jehoiakim on the throne, he only laid the land under tribute. The Chaldeans carried these sacred vessels away at three different times." (Clarke)
  - a) In the war spoken of in this place
  - b) In the taking of Jerusalem and Jeconiah a few months after, 2Kings 24:13
  - c) Eleven years after, under the reign of Zedekiah, when the city and temple were totally destroyed, and the land ruined (2 Kings 25:8-16)
5. They went from "the house of God" into the "house of his god" – this was Bel (called Belus by the Greek and Roman writers – the same as Baal) – "to the

temple of Bel, at Babylon. This was a temple of great magnificence, and the worship of Bel was celebrated there with great splendor (see Is. 46:1). These vessels were subsequently brought out at the command of Belshazzar, at his celebrated feast, and employed in the conviviality and revelry of that occasion. See Dan. 5:3.

#### Isaiah 46:1

<sup>1</sup> Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages were heavy loaden; they are a burden to the weary beast.

## **II. GOD'S PROMISES WILL ALWAYS BE KEPT – VS. 3-4**

***A. The promise of a remnant being preserved in Babylon is seen in Daniel and the other children spoken of here.***

***B. The promise that they would prosper in Babylon is also seen here – see Jeremiah 29:1-7.***

#### Jeremiah 29:1-7

<sup>1</sup> Now these are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captives, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon;

<sup>2</sup> (After that Jeconiah the king, and the queen, and the eunuchs, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and the carpenters, and the smiths, were departed from Jerusalem;)

<sup>3</sup> By the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan, and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, (whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent unto Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon) saying,

<sup>4</sup> Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon;

<sup>5</sup> Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them;

<sup>6</sup> Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished.

<sup>7</sup> And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.

***C. Within the fulfillment of the promises to Israel is a description of a group of children that God blessed in such a way as to be used of Him for a special purpose.***

1. Vs. 3 states they were "certain of the children of Israel" – they were a select group.

**2 Kings 20:17–18**

<sup>17</sup> Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD.

<sup>18</sup> And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of

the king of Babylon.

[Isaiah 39:7](#)

<sup>7</sup> And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

2. They are described as being "of the king's seed, and of the princes" – not just any of the children of Israel which were taken captive but those of the royal blood line, or of the King of Judah's family (most likely descendants of David), or some way related to it; those that were of princely birth, the children of persons of the first rank, or of the nobles and dukes.
3. Vs. 4 says they were "children" – this is where we get the impression that Daniel and his three companions were in their teens – the Israelite historians place their age between 15 and 20.
4. "In whom was no blemish" – they were injury and scar free, no physical defects at all – "The object was to select those who were most perfect in form, perhaps partly because it was supposed that beautiful youths would most grace the court, and partly because it was supposed that such would be likely to have the brightest intellectual endowments. It was regarded as essential to personal beauty to be without blemish." (Barnes)
5. "Well favoured" – not favored among men but of good appearance, beautiful.

6. "Skillful in all wisdom" – intelligent, wise – these were to be the most obviously talented, gifted young men; as well as those that were the most educated according to the custom of their country.
7. "Cunning in knowledge" – intelligent and skillful; not just were they "book smart," they were also able to use that "smart" for good use – they were smart and had common sense. "Understanding science"
  - a) The word "science" is only used this one time in the Old Testament, and only once in the New Testament (1 Tim. 6:20).
  - b) The word "science" here refers to the ability to gain knowledge by study.
  - c) That is, the sciences which prevailed among the Hebrews. They were not a nation distinguished for "science," in the sense in which that term is now commonly understood – embracing astronomy, chemistry, geology, mathematics, electricity, etc.; but their science extended chiefly to music, architecture, natural history, agriculture, morals, theology, war, and the knowledge of future events; in all which they occupied an honorable distinction among the nations. In many of these respects they were, doubtless, far in advance of the Chaldeans; and it was probably the purpose of the Chaldean monarch to avail himself of what they knew. (Barnes)
8. "Such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace" – not only strength of body, which was requisite to a long waiting there, as sometimes they were obliged to

do; but strength of mind, courage, and undauntedness, to stand before the king and his nobles, without showing a rustic fear, and timidity of mind (Gill).

9. "And whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans"
  - a) This was the ultimate goal of this program the king wanted instituted
  - b) They were to be taught the history and life and knowledge of the Babylonians, as well as their language.
  - c) The word "learning" is most often translated "book" in the Old Testament, and deals with simply learning from books, or what is written.
  - d) They had to learn the language (which differed chiefly in dialect and pronunciation but was of the same basic root language) in order to read the books that they had to learn from.

### **III. GOD'S PROTECTION WILL ALWAYS BE NEEDED – vs. 5-7**

***A. Daniel and the others needed the protection of God or they would never have been able to survive.***

***B. Vs. 5 relates to us that those taken – not just Daniel and his three friends, but many others – were fed by the king's servants – God provided for them – we will come back and look at why Daniel and the three didn't eat what the others ate but the fact is that God provided for***

***all of them as well as protected all of them.***

***C. We need that same protection today – if it weren't for God's hand of protection in our lives today the Devil would destroy every one of us – Job is an illustration of this, along with Daniel (and Noah, for that matter) .***